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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

## Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : FE - Mr. Drumright *10/30/53* *CA & file*

FROM : FE - Mr. Ogburn *11/5/53*

SUBJECT: Policy on Formosa

*Thank you for your memorandum of October 30 inviting me to offer positive suggestions about our policy with respect to Formosa.*

Clearly that policy must be a concomitant of our policy with respect to China proper. The first question to be answered, therefore, is whether we are going to try to get rid of the Chinese Communists or are going to try to live with them. If we are going to try to get rid of them, then our objective must be to bring pressures to bear upon them sufficient either to eliminate them or to cause them to abandon Communism. If we are going to try to live with them then our objective must be a general settlement in the Far East based upon acceptance of the Peiping regime as the real power in China, in which case we would hope that internal developments in mainland China would eventually bring about a more favorable attitude on the part of that regime, abetted by such pressures and inducements as we would be able to develop.

If our purpose is to destroy our adversary in mainland China then it was illogical for us to agree to the Korean armistice. It does not make sense to seek a negotiated peace with a government you mean to destroy. Moreover, if we are dedicated to the replacement of the Chinese Communist regime, all we gain from the Korean armistice is a profitless breathing spell for which we must pay by: (1) giving the Chinese and Korean Communists the opportunity to renew their strength; (2) permitting a relaxation on the domestic front in the United States; and (3) discouraging and embittering both the Republic of Korea and Nationalist China, which would be our strongest allies (and we should not have many others) in a showdown with Communist China. Having nevertheless accepted an armistice in Korea, we should now, it seems to me, set as our terms in the Political Conference the unification of Korea either through nationwide elections or elections to fill the seats reserved for North Koreans in the legislature of the Republic of Korea -- if, that is, an accommodation with the Chinese Communists is not our objective. If we cannot obtain those terms we should join the Republic of Korea in a drive to the Yalu. We should also amass the forces we would require to achieve the goal we have set for ourselves. This would mean expanding the Chinese Nationalist armed forces to the utmost possible and expanding our own armed forces to the extent necessary to support a successful campaign against the Chinese Communists on the mainland and at the same time to deter the Soviet Union from intervening. I would suppose that very nearly full mobilization would be called for. Certainly there could be no

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thought of a balanced budget or reduced taxes.

In brief, if our objective is to break the hold of the Chinese Communists on the mainland then I believe we should do what is necessary to achieve that objective. I myself think that this course of action would be a bad mistake and if persisted in, could be disastrous for the United States. However, I may be wrong. In any case, by accepting as our objective the destruction of the Chinese Communist regime with all that is implied, we should at least have a policy that is consistent, that can be understood both at home and abroad, and that can serve as a basis of planning and of decision. At the worst we should at least discover and prove to all elements in our national community that such a course of action is not a feasible one for the United States and, with better hope of national solidarity, we could attempt a more feasible alternative.

If we are not prepared to take the steps necessary to bring about a change by force in mainland China, then I believe we should face the fact that we are not. We should recognize that we are in fact accepting the Chinese Communist regime as a lasting feature of the landscape. If this is the conclusion we come to, then the consequences will follow almost automatically. I for one believe that honor would require us to go first of all to Chiang Kai-shek and make known to him where we stand. I would tell him that we see no hope of restoring the authority of the National Government on the mainland. A successful campaign on the mainland, we should point out, would require far stronger forces than we can develop and assign to such a purpose, particularly since our main strength must be reserved against the possibility of full-scale Soviet intervention. I would say that we have no evidence to indicate that defections from the Communists' to the Nationalists' colors would play a decisive role in a campaign on the mainland. I would point out that the inescapable consequence of this appraisal of the situation is that we must regard Formosa as indefinitely or permanently separated from the mainland.

Before proceeding any further in a determination of policy with respect to Formosa I would give Chiang Kai-shek a full chance to be heard. The purpose would be not to open our basic decision to reconsideration — that decision would be unalterable — but to adapt our method of carrying it out to the preferences of Chiang and his government, whose fate has always been to suffer the consequences of extreme oscillations in American opinion and policy and who deserve all the consideration we can give them. While I should endeavor, as far as possible, to adapt our tactics in Formosa to Chiang's views, I should regard our over-all objectives as inescapably determined by the circumstances and by our basic decision. Those objectives would comprise: (1) withdrawal of recognition of the Chinese National Government as the government of China and recognition of that Government as the government of Formosa alone (by this means the permanent separation of Formosa from China would be formalized and made unmistakable); (2) the establishment of an independent Formosan republic; (3) reduction in the size of the Chinese Nationalist forces to those required by a Formosan republic and equivalent reduction in our military assistance program; (4) training of native Formosans

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in self-government by the Chinese Nationalists and the progressive transfer to the Formosans of the powers of government; and (5) a defense pact between the United States and the Formosan Republic analogous to our pact with the Philippines.

Our present policy of pressure against Communist China and support of Nationalist China could be defined as "all measures short of those that could be effective". In the next few years we shall probably have succeeded in goading Communist China and in increasing its dependence on the USSR and its attachment to the USSR without having seriously reduced or inhibited the development of its capabilities. This policy may be likened to throwing darts at a tiger. In the same period we shall have devoted a very considerable amount of resources to Nationalist China without having given it the power to play a significant role in China's future. This policy may be likened to spending a great deal of money to keep an invalid in a state midway between recovery and extinction at the cost of depriving the more promising members of the family of the support they require for their own well-being. It seems to me that we are fooling ourselves and fooling the American people. Supposedly we are striving to make real that which we are maintaining in theory -- that is, that the National Government is the true government of China. In actuality we are simply not doing this. The chances that the National Government will ever again be a power in China as a result of what we are doing are negligible. Yet by maintaining the fiction that it is the government of China, we relieve ourselves of the responsibility of dealing with the situation created by the fact that it is not and never will be.

What is perhaps more reprehensible than fooling ourselves is that we are fooling our Chinese friends. Our allowing Chiang to build his hopes upon a return to the mainland -- hopes to which General Chase's periodic utterances on the subject of the task of the future must seem to give substance -- is like allowing a girl to believe you intend to marry her, without your actually telling her so, when it is not your intention at all. We are keeping the Chinese Nationalists dangling. We won't say Yes and we won't say No. Naturally it will be difficult to tell the Chinese Nationalists that they are living in a dream -- it is difficult to tell a girl that -- but to fail to do so does not seem honorable to me.

Our policy with respect to China and Formosa is neither one thing nor the other. And the reason why it is neither, I suspect, is because to decide it either way must be extraordinarily painful. To do what is necessary to overthrow Chinese Communist rule on the mainland would require very great sacrifices of the American people -- if it is possible at all. A decision to accept the fact of Chinese Communist rule on the mainland would be attacked as appeasement -- and this course, too, would require sacrifices, for if we are to negotiate a settlement in the Far East with the Chinese Communists, we must do so from a position of real strength.

Grasping the nettle will not, however, grow easier for being put off. Until we make up our minds one way or the other, the responsible officials in our government must continue to suffer the agonies they have been having to endure for some time now. Until we have a clear line with respect to China, we shall not be able

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to dispose of any of the subsidiary problems. These problems will continue to accumulate and the burdens upon our overworked officials will multiply. Korea and Indochina will be impossible of solution. Our political and moral leadership will continue to evaporate. We shall find the initiative continuing to elude us. Not knowing where we wish to go, we shall be at the mercy of those extremists, domestic and foreign, who know precisely where they wish to go.

Difficult decisions grow more difficult for being postponed. Almost anything is better -- at least less demoralizing -- than temporizing indefinitely. But if the choice is adequately explained to the American people, I believe the decision will be found not as painful as might be feared.

I may be all wrong in these opinions. But they are the opinions I incline to hold, and they are opinions I feel someone should express.

FE:COgburn,Jr.:aow

cc: CA

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